

Ch. 13 – daily "Non-Duality & Science" blogs

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Reality 57

The unknown Knower of all that is known, the Supreme Knowledge itself, Consciousness remains undivided by the *triad* of Knower, Knowing, & Known. Consciousness can never be a known or unknown object. Consciousness is the Witness of all, the only Knower. Consciousness, the Knower, is never defined by the Known. Consciousness, the Witness of every state, of all thought, is not defined by thought, nor contained in any state. The Witness is never known. Consciousness is ever non-objective. Consciousness is formless – with nothing objective within or without. Unknown, Consciousness alone is known. Not a *process* of knowing, Consciousness alone is knowing. Not a knower, Consciousness alone is the Knower, the unknown Knower of all that is known.

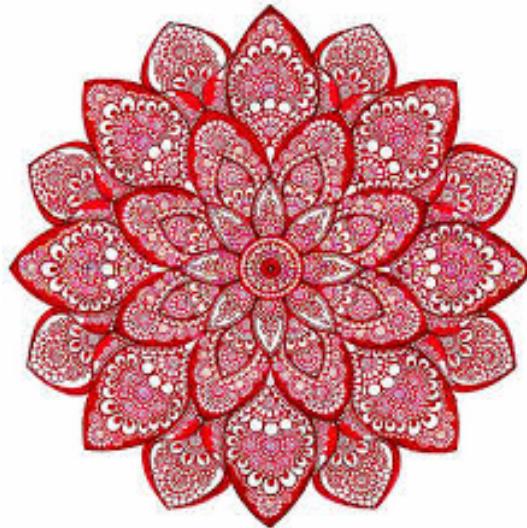
Bondage is only Ignorance, or error in understanding. One does not attain Self-Knowledge due to Ignorance about the True Nature of the Self & adherence to false conceptions about the Self. The Ignorance makes one feel bound, & the adherence to false notions maintains the Ignorance, yielding the apparent solidity & false continuity of Illusion. Both Ignorance & the tendency to adhere to it are destroyed by Self-Inquiry to know the Truth of the Self.

Sri Shankara declares that just as trees on the bank seem to move when one is in a moving boat, so “transmigratory existence” (*life in a Waking World, repeating like nightly dreams, but rather as “physical” Re-incarnation*) seems to be true to one who mis-identifies the Self with the Mind.

Thus, when the Mind “moves”, one thinks that the Self (*like the stationary trees*) “moves”. When the Mind is still, one assumes the Self is still. Because the modifications of the Mind are pervaded by the reflected light of Consciousness, with the qualities of Reality & Identity borrowed from pure Being, one assumes that the Self is identical with the Mind & identifies oneself with those modifications. Thus one imagines, “my thoughts, my state of mind or being, my experiences, etc.” The Mind, or the Ego, is *objective*, appearing by the light of pure (*absolute non-dual*) Consciousness alone. Pure Consciousness is the Absolute & is directly realized as existing as such when the “this”, or the *objective* portion, falsely attributed to it is negated.

Ignorance, or Illusion, is merely a superimposition. By “superimposition” is meant the imagined placement of some attributes, that do not belong to the Self, upon the Self. The basis of the superimposition is real. That basis is pure Existence, pure Consciousness. The superimposed is not a reality in & of itself, but is only a product of Imagination, the result of Ignorance.

It is like the *snake* imagined to be present when there is only a discarded *rope* in dim light. The *snake* is not real & was not really born. But in Imagination, the *snake* seems to be there, & as long as one is convinced that the *snake* is there, the true *rope* is invisible. If one removes that Illusion with the light of Knowledge, he sees the *rope* alone, as it is, which has been the only reality the entire time. The *snake* in the analogy represents all that is attributed falsely to the Reality of the Absolute Self, such as the World, the Body, Mind & its conceptions & tendencies, as well as Ego.



Reality 58

[*Mandala II*]

The unknown Knower of all that is known, the Supreme Knowledge itself, Consciousness remains undivided by the *triad* of Knower, Knowing, & Known. Consciousness can never be a known or unknown object. Consciousness is the Witness of all, the only Knower. Consciousness, the Knower, is never defined by the Known. Consciousness, the Witness of every state, of all thought, is not defined by thought, nor contained in any state. The Witness is never known. Consciousness is ever non-objective. Consciousness is formless – with nothing objective within or without. Unknown, Consciousness alone is

known. Not a *process* of knowing, Consciousness alone is knowing. Not a knower, Consciousness alone is the Knower, the unknown Knower of all that is known.

The removal of superimposition is accomplished by Self-Inquiry. This is the intention of the negation of the Upanishads, “*neti, neti*”, “not this”. Such indicates the negation of one’s attributes, identity, or definition, of what is not truly the Self, not the essential Existence, or pure Consciousness. The removal of superimposition is the revelation of the Truth. The Truth, or the Reality, is not newly created, nor did the superimposition diminish it in any way, just as the *snake* did not chase the *rope* away. But to see the *rope*, the Imagination of the *snake* must cease. Similarly, to know the Truth of the Self, Ignorance must cease.

True Knowledge is not experienced unless the prior ignorant conception is negated, just as the *snake* notion is destroyed to see the *rope*. The Self, of the nature of pure Consciousness, is self-existent & can never be negated. Egoism has its origin in Delusion & has for its *object* that which is only imagined. Its definitions are only thoughts. The discernment of “Not this, not this” negates the very existence of Egoism along with its origin, its effects, & its imagined object.

All qualities, gross (*physical*) or subtle (*mental*), ought to be negated from the Self, from one’s Identity. If one is to know the Self as it is, whatever be the qualities attributed to the Self, be they *physical* or *mental*, they are to be regarded as mere ornaments. These should not be regarded as the Identity of the one who “wears” those “ornaments” (*qualities*).

If one rejects all that is *objective* from one’s Identity, one comes to the conclusion that the Self is the Knower, free from all that is perceived & conceived. In the same manner as one relinquishes mis-identification with the Body, & all that is *objective*, so should one sever the mis-identification with the supposed *subject*, which is the Ego.

The Self’s existence is independent of all & is different from all that is *objective*. The *objectified* “I” is the Ego. The superimposed *objective* portion of the “I” – consciousness should be abandoned, for it is not actually the Self. Negation of what is *objective* means also negation of the Ego. What remains is that which is implied in the aphorism: *Aham Brahmasmi* – “I am Brahman”. Only *Brahman* can be itself, *I – without – a – 2nd*. That is the only true “I”.



Reality 59

Brahman is unborn, immortal, imperishable, ageless, & all-comprehensive. The same Absolute *Brahman* appears, according to one's understanding, as God, who is said to be the Lord who dispassionately dispenses the results of *karma*, or as the Witness, which is Consciousness in relation to all else, or the attributeless, eternal "I", of the nature of the indivisible, non-dual, Being-Consciousness & which alone is *without - a - 2nd*.

The Self has neither rise nor set, is neither in darkness nor illumined, but is always the spiritual Light, with nothing material or mental in its nature at all. The distinction between the Self & oneself is due only to superimposition, which is like imagining different openings in a castle wall, for instance, to be different spaces, rather than perceiving the castle space itself. The Self is non-dual, 1 – without – a – 2nd. It is neither distinct nor in relation to anything else. For non-dual Existence means there is no other. There is, thus, no difference or non-difference, no oneness or manyness, & no separate knower or doer or experiencer. The Self has nothing to accept or reject. And there is nothing, or no one else to accept or reject the Self. There is no one else to think the Self is, or that the Self is not. Such is the Truth regarding the Self.

Just as the Mind becomes the Object, the Instrument or means of Knowing, the Actor, the Action, & the results in a Dream, so is this also the case in the Waking state. The Real Self is different from the Mind & all those things that the Mind becomes (*object, instrument of knowing, actor, action, results*). The Self is without interior & exterior, such as the Mind & the World. The Self is homogenous Consciousness. Know the Self by ceasing the attribution of anything exterior or interior to the Self. Remembrance & forgetfulness, including remembrance & forgetfulness of the Self, these processes are also, only of the Mind. Both of these processes are products of Ignorance & do not touch the Self. Cease to regard the Self as a known or unknown *object*. If the Supreme Self is regarded as an *object* of knowledge, such is a superimposition of Imagination or Ignorance. True Knowledge prevails when such Ignorance, or superimposition, is negated. This is like the case with the *rope* & the illusion of the *snake*.

When the conceptions of "me" & "mine" are attributed to the Self, such are manifestations of Ignorance. They are superimpositions upon the Self, which is only One, with neither Individuality nor any experience or thing possessed by and Individual. The "individual self" is thought to be the Seer, Hearer, Thinker, Knower, & such. In Reality, it is *Brahman*, the imperishable, indivisible, Non-Dual Self. The "individual self" or "I" is not different from the Real Self, which is *Brahman*.

Meditation on the Self is declared to be without Time, Space, direction, or Causation, since the Self is without these things. The Self itself is to be realized as timeless, & the Realization itself, being of the same nature, is bodiless & without regard to place. The Self itself is, without Causation, being Uncreated & Unborn. And the Realization, being of the same nature, need not wait for circumstance & is not an attempt to produce the Self anew. The Realization is a realizing of what the Self *truly is*. Let the Mind thus turn within, immersing itself in Self-Inquiry, absorbing itself in Knowledge, thereby losing its own form as it searches inwardly for its source. In this lies great Bliss & Immortality.



Reality 60

All the *objects* of knowledge change. All that are described as “mine” & Ego, also cannot illumine themselves, nor can they illumine each other. The Self is different from all that are described as “mine” & Ego. The Self is the unchanging, illuminating Consciousness. This Consciousness is truly one’s only Identity. Therefore, there can never truly be Bondage.

One Non-Dual Self alone is. The one Non-Dual Self is the undivided Consciousness. This is the only Knower in all. There are not different kinds of Knowers, such as higher & lower knowers. The Minds of all are pervaded by the one Consciousness within, which is the Self. This is the "I" of all. So there is no one else who knows, or who does not know. The "I" is truly the Absolute, *Brahman*, all-knowing & all-pervading.

This "I" pervades & illumines the Mind. An the Mind pervades & illumines all things ever experienced. Thus this "I" is the illuminator & pervader of all. This Self is the Witness of all *objects* of the Mind. These mental *objects* are subtle thoughts & also all the *objects* conceived as external as well. This includes being the Witness of all other Minds conceived as existing within the Mind. Thus the Self is the Witness of all.

The Mind cannot conceive the Self, yet the Mind has no existence apart from the Self. The Self can neither be accepted, nor rejected by any of the Minds. That which cannot be accepted or rejected by the Mind is *Brahman*. That is truly the "I". *Brahman* & the Self are One.



Reality 61

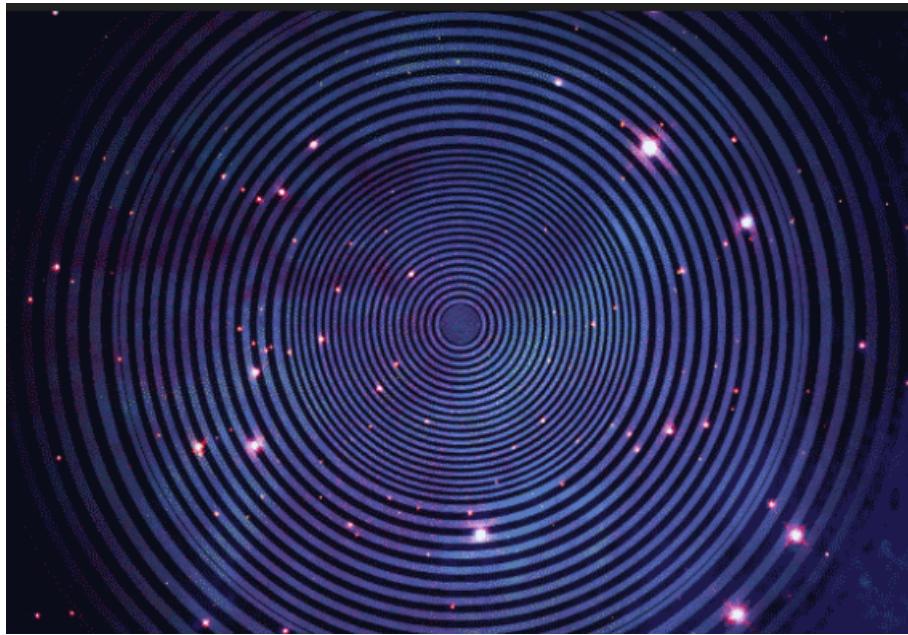
The Mind & its modifications, in the form of thoughts, modes, & states, are limited. The Self, unlike any of the Minds, is not of limited knowledge, for Supreme Knowledge is the Self's true nature. That Supreme Knowledge is unmodified Consciousness itself, which is the Self itself. The Self has no Ignorance, just as *light* has no *darkness*. The Self is also without change, without impurity, ever beyond conception, forever beyond the Senses, & never of a material nature.

The Self is, by analogy, said by the Wise, to be like *sunlight*, while the Mind is like a *crystal*. And the various Experiences are like the *colors* seen in the *crystal*. The significance of this analogy is that all *objects* are seen in the Mind only by the *light* of the Self. *Objects* of knowledge, sensed or mental, appear only in the Waking & Dream states. When these Waking & Dream states are not present, no such sensed or mental *objects* are experienced. Yet the Knower (*the Self*) is always the Knower, never ceasing, unlike all that is unreal. For the Knower is formless Consciousness. Duality appears only in those Waking & Dream states & is thus likewise unreal. For what is Real must be Real always. By relinquishing the superimposition of the *known* on the Knower, one then abides as the Non-Dual Knower, unceasing Consciousness, always.

Prior to the discrimination of the Self & the non-Self, one may think that the Absolute does not exist. One may doubt that the Self alone exists. After such discriminating Self-Inquiry, what was thought of as an Individual *self* is known to be only *Brahman*. There is no Individual *self*, or Mind, which would have done such thinking. Upon such Self-Inquiry, the experiential Knowledge is that only the Self. *Brahman* is, & the Individual & Mind are only *Brahman* & nothing else.

For the Self, which is of the nature of pure Consciousness, the connection to any *objective* experience, mental or sensed, is a product of delusion. The "I" is truly free of all attributes, & is not associated with any quality or entity, & is ever non-*objective*. The Ignorance that imagines otherwise is purposeless. That Ignorance merely creates Bondage among the ever-free, Suffering in the midst of Bliss. This is like drowning in a *mirage* whose "waters" serve no purpose. If the delusive attempts, to connect the Self

with what is not the Self, are given up, the Mind rests in *Brahman*, the Absolute Self, “as if free from Bondage”, say the Sages. In Reality, that Self was never bound. The Self is ever Unborn & ever free of Duality.



Reality 62

All the efforts involving mis-identification within the Mind & all the superimposition of experience upon the Self produce only Illusion & not anything real. The Illusion is that of limitation by Form; the Illusion of being a Body, or at a location; the Illusion of perishability; the Illusion of the belief that something destructive of Bliss can exist; the Illusion of differentiation or division into parts, & of connection with actions & their results. The Self is actually all-pervading & space-like, imperishable. The Self is the eternal Bliss itself, *Siva*, un-differentiated & un-divided, partless, actionless, & free of all *karma*.

The infinite Self is only one, & nothing other than the Self can belong to the Self. Therefore the Mind cannot belong to the Self. The Self is ever unattached & cannot belong to anything else. Therefore the Self is unaffected by anything done by the Mind. When attachment is present, even as the notion of possession, the possessor, as it were is possessed by the possession. Since the Self is unattached to all, including the Mind, the Self is possessed by none & is not affected by any. If one becomes detached from all things & to one's own thoughts in the Mind, he finds that what he has reached was the real Self all along. Since there cannot exist a Mind that is something other than the Self which is Infinite & Non-Dual, the Mind cannot have, in Reality, any activity or its results.

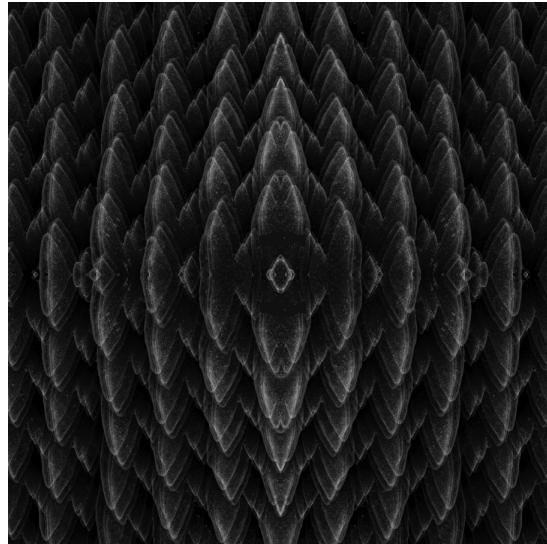
Freedom from the Mind is freedom from the fear of loss of Happiness & from the fear of ceasing to exist. This Freedom from desires & the grief of concomitant with desires. Thus, one who knows the Self, free from the Mind, is truly happy. & is solely *That* which is the same in all beings.

All beings are, by nature, pure Consciousness. Apparent difference from this Consciousness is only illusory appearance due to Ignorance. The illusory difference is removed by comprehending the

Knowledge that one is solely Being. Such Knowledge alone is the means to realize immortality, for Being never ceases to be. Nothing else can yield this Realization, for Consciousness is identical with Being. Knowledge is of the nature of Consciousness itself, & there really exists nothing but Being, which is Knowledge or Consciousness.

In relation to all, the Self is the Witness, & being such is attributeless. The Witness is *That* which never changes, but which knows all the changes – thoughts, modes, & states – of all Minds. The Witness knows all the functions of the Mind in Waking & Dream. In the absence of the Mind's functions, that is without those 2 states of Waking & Dream, what remains of the Witness is pure Consciousness, which is omnipresent & immutable. This the Self, the true "I" which is free from Ignorance & has no attributeness, no functions, & no qualities, & which is transcendent of all 3 States (*waking, dream, deep dreamless sleep*). Space-like & never tainted by any of the defects or limitations of the beings that Consciousness indwells, Consciousness alone is the Self.

The Self is free from all notions, forms, & actions. The Self is always 1 – without – a – 2nd. Adi Shankara proclaims that, as long as there is no Self-Knowledge, the identification with the Body & such, & the belief in the authenticity of Sense-Perceptions continue, just as Dreams appear to be true as long as one does not wake up. To spiritually wake up, one must know the Self truly. The Reality of the Self is pure Consciousness with no Duality & with nothing else existing whatsoever. One cannot have simultaneously the Knowledge of the Self along with the idea of oneself as the performer of activity, or an experiencer. For steady unalloyed Knowledge, one should cease such mis-identification.



Reality 63

In the Waking State, one experiences the Interior & the Exterior, what is sensed & what is thought. In the Dream State, the situation is the same. Both what is sensed & what is thought in both States are not the Self & are unreal. The contents of both what is sensed & what is thought in both Waking & Dream states should not be regarded as defining the Self. When what is sensed & what is thought are falsely associated with the Self, this is superimposition. No activity of the Exterior & the Interior yields Liberation. The activity of an unreal superimposition cannot yield eternal, real Liberation from that unreality.

Liberation is by Knowledge alone & Knowledge is neither sensory nor conceptual in nature. The Self that is realized by such Knowledge has neither Inner nor Outer, but is ever-existent, omnipresent, indivisible, & ineffable.

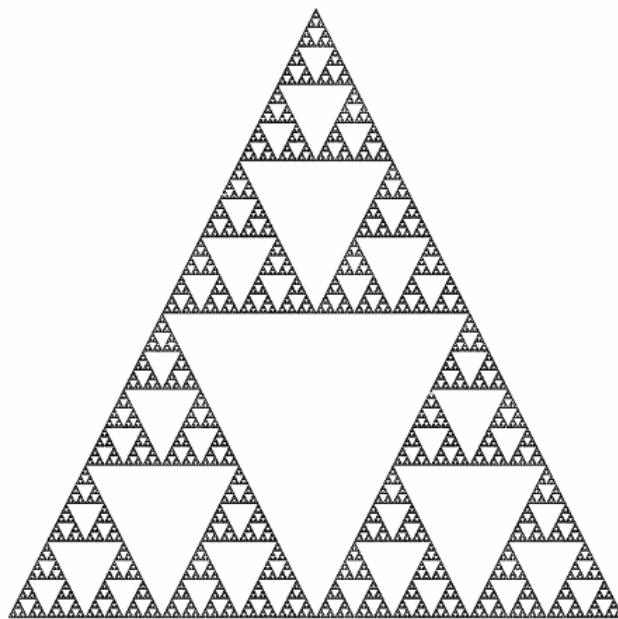
The true nature of the individual self is actually Brahman. There is only one Self, whether imagined to be individualized, or else realized as it truly is. If one inquires into this apparently individualized self, all that one finds is the Self, which is Brahman. All that is thought to make oneself different from the Self can be relinquished by the Self-Inquiry that negates mis-identification, which is the questioning “Who am I ?” For this reason the Upanshads instruct neti, neti “not this, not this”.

Immortal Liberation is freedom from destruction & fear. The Individual seems as if subject to both destruction & fear. In truth, the Existence that seems to be an Individual is only Brahman. Self-Inquiry negates all that is thought to make the Self differentiated into individuals.

One should meditate on being the Witness & not anything witnessed, whether the witnessed be a known Conception or a known Perception. The entire personal orientation should be utterly abandoned. The Identity & the Reality should be known as the Witness. And all that is witnessed should be known as not the Self & as unreal. The meditator should discriminate more & more finely between the Knower & the Known. Thereby mis-identification ceases. Thereby superimposition of the Known upon the Knower ceases. When the Witness alone remains as one’s Identity, & as Reality, all that there is pure Consciousness which is real Being. It is an “I”-less “I” with nothing else whatsoever. Until the Self is realized firmly, one should discriminate between & cease to mis-identify, inquiring with “Who am I ?”

Knowledge is “Abidance” (in & as the Self) free from any identification with the Body, the Mind, & the Ego. Delusion is the mistaking of oneself for the Body, the Mind, & the Ego, all of which are objective. Such Delusion veils the Blissful experience of the Self. One cannot have simultaneously the ideas” “I am this, I am like this, or I do this or that” & at the same time have the Knowledge of being the Self. There one ought to persist in Self-Inquiry so that one becomes free of such ideas. This involves the cessation mis-identification with the Body & the Mind. Since Being is not the Body or the Mind, one never does anything. Similarly, Being is never “this” or “like this”, but is only Being.

Ignorance makes one believe that the Mind, which is illumined by Consciousness, is the Self. The Mind’s apparent power of knowing is only the “reflected light” of Consciousness. This is like seeing sunlight play upon a shiny object & thinking that the light seen actually originates from the illumined object. Mistaking the Mind for the Self is like mistaking the reflection in a mirror to actually be one’s actual face. Mistaking the Body for the Self is taking a corpse to be alive & holding it dear, & this is the cause of Suffering. Mistaking the Ego to be the Self is like believing, as fact, the mythological story of someone who was never born. Mis-identification is the cause of confusion. Self-Knowledge is “Self-Abidance” with no false identification with the Ego, Mind, & Body.



Reality 64

The Self alone knows. The which is objective, inclusive of the Ego, can have no knowing power. For all that is objective is not Consciousness itself & is therefore unreal. The objective & unreal cannot know themselves, cannot know each other, & cannot know the Knower. The only Knower is the Self which the unknown Know of all that is known. Though it cannot be known objectively, the Self is nonetheless known in Self-Knowledge devoid of the triads of knowing-knower-known, by the Self itself, which is the Self of the Sages who truly know.

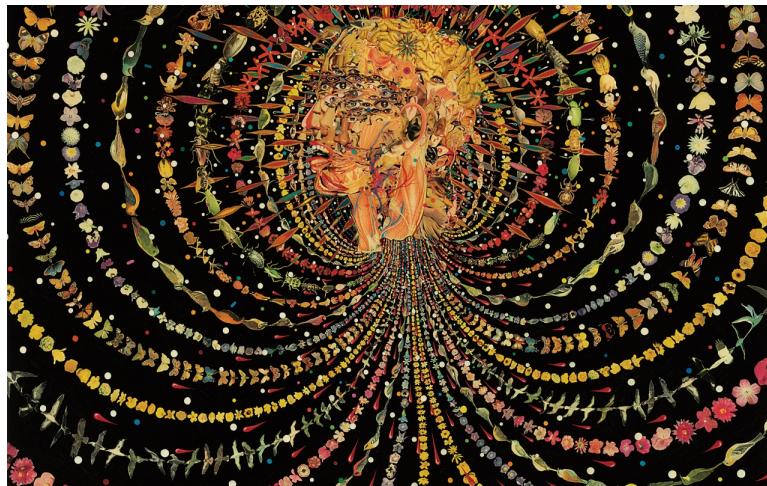
The Self is the true Knower of Knowledge that is referred to in the *Upanishad* aphorism, *tat tvam asi* “Thou art That” & not anything else. Anything else would be a mere superimposition on the real Self & would have no such Knowledge. There is no other Knower. This is the all-comprehensive Knower, which is Absolute Consciousness itself, ever-free, homogenous, Non-Dual, & space-like.

This Knower is realized when the illusory *objective* aspect has been negated. The Knower can never be the *known*. All that is *known* is subject to destruction, but the essence of the Knower can never *not be*.

For Realization of the immortal Bliss of eternal Being, one should know oneself as the Knower alone, which is unalloyed, boundless Consciousness. In knowing the Self truly, one knows that Consciousness is never non-existent & never alters its nature. Consciousness is never an experiencer, never a thinker, never a sensory perceiver, never a performer of action, or an individualized knower since Consciousness is without an Ego.

Thus, one who knows himself truly, knows, “I am without a Body, & I am not engaged in bodily action. I am without Senses, & I am not engaged in any sensing. I do not have speech; & I do not speak. I do not have *prana*; & I neither live nor die. I do not have a Mind; & I never think. I am not an “I”, or an individual being & there is nothing I become.”

Such a Sage need not think that this is so. It is so, & expression have merely been given to these truths to indicate that which actually ineffable & of the nature of silent Knowledge. Since the eternal Self is always of the nature of Consciousness, it is ever without Ignorance. Similarly, the Self is without knowledge conceived as a state or mode of Mind. The Self has no states or phases, & therefore, is beyond both Ignorance & Knowledge. The only true Knowledge is the Self, itself.



Reality 65

Consciousness is self-luminous. By the light of Consciousness, all appears. When Consciousness disappears, Consciousness is still the same. The known has no light of its own. Inquiring, one should trace the Light inward to realize that which is perpetually illuminating. That ever-shining colorless Light illumines the Senses & the Mind, but can never be seen by the Senses, or envisioned by the Mind. Knowledge, or direct experience of this Light consists of the Identity with that Light. Changeless, blemishless, ever-free, immovable, eternal, bodiless & imperishable, without Ignorance or Knowledge, the Self is of the nature of Consciousness alone.

Existence, the Self, is the sole, ever-enduring, Non-Dual Reality. The aspirant can know Absolute Being or Brahman, only if the aspirant is identical with Brahman. The aspirant cannot know That if That (Brahman) is different from the aspirant. The Self, being Non-Dual Consciousness, cannot know anything or anyone other than Consciousness. The Self, being the sole-existent Consciousness, cannot be known by another. The Self alone can know itself.

There would be no use for the countless descriptions of the Absolute by the Scriptures & the holy Sages if That, the Self, were other than one's own Self. There would also be no use for the negation of all limited definitions if That, the Self, were other than one's own Self. For what purpose would be served by speaking of something that was never experienced by those Sages, those authors of the Scriptures, something could never be experienced by all ?

The negation of attributes & limited definitions of Brahman, as given in such spiritual instructions, must be understood to be the negation of attributes & limited definitions of the Self. If the instructions are to be applied to oneself, those instructions involve the negation of superimpositions, of what is not the Self, upon the Self.

The descriptions of the Self & the negation of attributes & limited definitions of the Self would be meaningless if they referred to some sort of other “Self” different from the aspirant’s own self. Such negations would further clarify that the Self is bodiless, non-sensory, without prana (“life force or energy”), free from thought, etc.

There are not 2 selves in the same one being (apparent person or human being). There is 1 Self, & when known as it is, the Self is known to be Infinite & Eternal, not a limited individual being, but just Non-Dual Being.

To realize this, the Knowledge of oneself as the Self, free from the Body & such, this Knowledge must become as certain & steady as the belief of a human being that he is a human being. No human being doubts this on any occasion.

When that human being determines by Self-Knowledge what, in Truth, that Existence is, that Being exists, then Absolute Being is known. And if that Knowledge is without doubt & without wavering, one has thus known what needs to be known, has experienced what needs to be experienced, & has realized what needs to be realized.



Reality 66

The basic premise of Non-Duality is that the Absolute exists & that the Absolute is identical with oneself. Therefore, Self-Knowledge is equated with the Realization of the Absolute. The basic premise of spiritual practice is that one knows that the Absolute exists & that realizing the Absolute is of utmost importance. This realization is Self-Realization. What is need for this Self-Knowledge, or Realization, is the relinquishment of the assumptions or concepts, that yield the Illusion of Bondage & Suffering. Knowledge of one’s Being, as it is, yields enduring Freedom & Peace. The true Self transcends the limitations of any kind of Individuality, Time, Birth, & Death. The Self is impersonal & is not confined to any Body or Individual.

One's approach to one's spirituality, meditation, & this Non-Dual Knowledge is of paramount importance, for the approach very much determines the experience. How one views anything determines how it appears to him. Clarification of one's understanding of oneself causes one to arrive at Self-Knowledge. To know this as being so, is itself the dawning of that Self-Knowledge. Deep meditation dissolves the Ego, Ignorance, & Bondage of one who ardently meditates. Self-Inquiry within oneself to know oneself reveals the true Self to be limitless Consciousness, Absolute Being, & unconditioned Bliss.

This one's very Existence. One should continue meditating on the Teaching of Self-Knowledge by the practice of Self-Inquiry until one conclusively realizes the Self & abides without the least trace of Ignorance or Bondage. Listening (*sravana*), reflection (*manana*), & deep meditation (*nididhyasana*) are said to constitute ways of practicing Self-Knowledge. Self-Inquiry: "Who am I?", knowing oneself free of mis-identification, & steady Abidance as the Self always, these are the inner experiences of listening (*sravana*), reflection (*manana*), & deep meditation (*nididhyasana*).

On a path of Self-Knowledge, discrimination signifies the ability to discern what is true & also implies the ability to determine what is false or unreal. By so discerning, or discriminating, one pursues Truth to realize it & destroys the Dream of Illusion or Ignorance. Ignorance creates Suffering. What destroys Ignorance reveals blissful Freedom, or Liberation. Ignorance is destroyed when one discerns that it is, indeed, Ignorance & not the Truth. Ignorance exists & is binding only if one conjures it up & believes it. If, by discrimination, one discerns its unreality, or false nature, Ignorance no longer binds & ceases to exist.

In the place of Ignorance then, there is found real Knowledge, which is Knowledge of the Reality itself. Just as one, wishing to arrive somewhere, needs first to know where it is that he wishes to go & how to proceed to that place, so too one needs to recognize the place of arrival, which is the highest Truth. One likewise needs to recognize the means to so arrive, which is Knowledge, & also recognize the traveler, which is oneself, & that all these are in the same "place", of the same essential nature, & are, indeed, the very same Supreme Being.

If one is immersed in Samsara, the repetitive Cycle of Illusion, Birth, & Deaths, filled with Suffering, the way to liberate oneself is by Self-Knowledge. Liberation, which is the goal of spiritual practice, is one's own if, inquiring to know the Self, he discards all notions of "me" & "mine" attains complete certitude as to the Space-like nature of Reality, & "abides" devoid of physical & mental forms, & the assumption of an Ego-entity.



Reality 67

The Ego is ignorantly assumed to be the Self &, thus the Knower. The conception of the Mind determine whether one is endowed with wrong knowledge, doubtful knowledge, or true knowledge. With mis-identification, there is wrong knowledge. Then, what is regarded as knowledge is actually Ignorance. Thereby arises self-caused Delusion regarding Happiness, Identity, & Reality.

With spiritual practice, wrong knowledge gives way to yet-doubtful knowledge. This means there is some actual knowledge regarding Happiness, Identity, & Reality. But this knowledge is not yet steady for it is either a conviction, without direct experience, or a conviction fused with some experience. But still, it is not steady because there remains the need to destroy remaining tendencies to mis-identify.

True Knowledge, however, is that state in which Knowledge is invariable. Also, here knowing & Being are one & the same. At all times, the same Consciousness is the only Knower, even when it appears as an Ego, a dissolving Ego, or as purely Ego-less. This is just like a clear crystal appearing as if endowed with different colors or as transparent, according to the proximity of various colors, or the absence of them. In Truth, all such states & their content are known by the Self, have their apparent existence by the Self, which is free from them & depends on no thought whatsoever to know itself. Even so, all such states & their content do not exist apart from the Self, though the Self itself can never be other than the Knowledge, Being itself.

Regarding the great aphorism (proclamation, *mahavakya*): “Thou art That”, wise Sages declare that the primary meaning of That is the Absolute Brahman. Likewise, the primary meaning of Thou is the Knower, or "I".

The essential meaning of That is the True Self. Likewise, the essential meaning of Thou is only pure Being, pure Consciousness. The meaning of both That & Thou is thus the same, & this identity is what art expresses. “Art” is an expression of complete Identity.

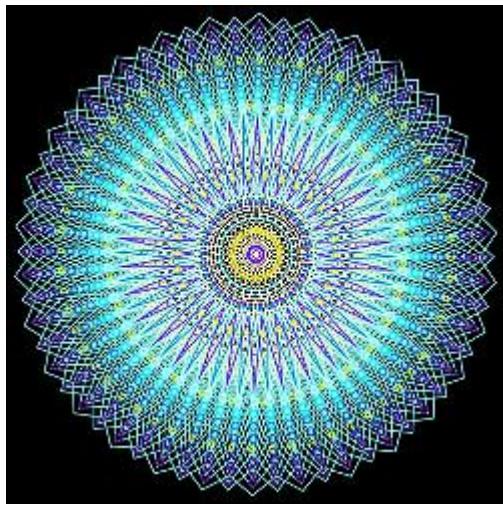
That complete Identity is realized by relinquishing other ideas regarding That, & most importantly, by Self-Inquiry into Thou. The deeper the Self-Inquiry into Thou, the more That is known as it is, for Thou art That.

No repetition of the idea: "I am That", "I am the Self", or "I am Brahman" is intended. For such implies the difference between the instructed & the instruction; between the meditator, the meditation, & the meditated upon; between the one desiring Liberation & the Liberation itself. Repetition further implies difference between the self who would know & the Self to be known; between the realizer & that realized.

The Non-Dual Teaching of Identity with the Absolute Self, Brahman, is to be practiced by Self-Inquiry, full of clear discrimination, that frees one of the false notion of Do-er-ship, of being a sensing entity, of being an experiencer, of being a thinker, & such. Thus one discerns that the one Self is not the Body, Mind, or Ego, or anything connected with these. Then one knows one's own true Self to be truly Brahman.

The Knowledge of the Self becomes possible only when the Ego vanishes. What remains is Self-evident, the Self-knowable, the eternally existing, the forever liberated that has never been bound. The Freedom & Happiness of this Realization have no cause or reason. This Freedom & Happiness are self-existing, as Being itself is. Only un-Happiness & Bondage seem to have reasons. By inquiry, these apparent reasons are found to be merely Ignorance.

When the Knowledge that one is the Self, Brahman, is not veiled by certain false notions, the Self-Knowledge becomes firm. Those are the false notions that Reality is something other than the formless, motionless, immutable Self, & that Happiness is other than the blissful Self. Then, the mis-identification of the Self with the Body or any other form becomes impossible.



Reality 68

The direct path of Knowledge is that in which one discriminates as described here, renounces the actions of the Body & the Mind. The direct path of Knowledge frees one from the ideas of being a Performer, Experiencer, Thinker, etc., abides free of outer sensing & inner conceiving activities, & thus know the Self to be That.

The practice of the Teaching of Thou art That is the Self-Inquiry: "Who am I ?" Self-Knowledge is firm when the Knowledge of the Self, which is the Absolute, is not contradicted by the false notions that one

lacks Bliss & has desires. Self-Knowledge is firm when the Self-Knowledge is not contradicted by the false notions that one is not Consciousness & a Do-er. Self-Knowledge is firm when the Self-Knowledge is not contradicted by the false notions that one is not Being, but instead a bound entity.

Though the Body is not the Self, the Self is not the Performer of Action, & Action is unrelated to Self-Knowledge. Action can in no way bring about the Liberation that this Self-Knowledge alone yields. The holy Sage who knows this will always be manifesting the Good, the True, & the Beautiful. With love for all Beings, knowing all to be himself, endowed with equanimity & imperturbable Peace, with no self-interest, he is ever engaged in the highest good, whether he appears active or still. His honesty derives from Truth itself, his love derives from the indivisible nature of Being, his Peace derives from the immovable Absolute, & his kindness & care derive from the perfect Fullness.

How would it be possible, for one who knows about Liberation & the Non-Dual Teaching of Identity with the Absolute Self, to engage in conduct that would be other than the good, the true, the beautiful, love, equanimity, peace, dis-interest, the highest good, honesty, kindness, & care.

Nonetheless, it is never possible to determine the state of a Realization Sage from the outer appearances of the Body with which he has no identity whatsoever. The Sage has gone beyond the Illusions of Life & Death, never to return to that which never really was. The Sage is serene in & as the Absolute, & abides as the Eternal.

Whatever is done, he is not the Do-er of anything. Whatever is said by the Sage, the Sage remains Silent. Whatever is thought, he remains unmodified. For he has known himself, & he himself is what he knows.

You are That. Realize the Truth of this by Self-Inquiry. Supreme Knowledge, Consciousness, is Brahman. Attain Liberation by Knowledge & realize that true Knowledge is the Eternal, Supreme Consciousness itself. This Self is Brahman. Inquire "Who am I ?" & realize pure Being as the *1-without-a-2nd*. I am Brhaman. Abide in the Natural State of the Real Self, in the state of Identity with no other "I".

Abide as That, which, when known, leaves no other thing to be known. Abide as That, the Happiness of which leaves nothing to be desired. Abide as That, which, when realized, leaves no other Reality but itself. Abide as That, which is the Self, which alone exists eternally, for it is That which alone is.



Reality 69Ego

Self-Realization is the Ego-less State. Freedom from the Ego is the essence of Liberation. It is Abidance in the Self as the Self. The falsely assumed Individual "I" is completely removed by Self-Knowledge, & the 1 true "I", the "I" of the "I", alone remains (*comparable to the metaphoric Eye of the Eye*). The Self is defined by Ramana Maharshi. Ribhu, & other Sages as "I-I". That's true "I-I" is the "I" in the statement "I am the Absolute" (*aham Brahmasmi*).

In the Realization of the significance of that *mahavakya* (great aphorism), of the Upanishad, "I am the Absolute *Brahman*", Sri Shankara explains that the entire notion of "I" is removed. This is just like the idea "a bandit is here" which is mis-conceived when perceiving a "tree stump in the darkness". The illusory "bandit" completely removed upon illumination being brought. (*The tree stump was formerly feared to be a bandit just as the Self is formerly feared to be an Ego*). *Brahman* alone is, & *Brahman* alone knows. When the "I" is removed, all of the "mine" is also removed, as such is completely dependent upon the delusion of "I".

The Ego is the root cause of Delusion, Illusion, Bondage, & Suffering. The Ego is the root of the Mind, even the very idea of an existent Mind, & the root of all else. It is the 1st illusion to be imagined & the last to disappear. The Ego is the cause, substance, & experiencer of all Illusion. Without the Ego Illusion is impossible.

The Ego has no actual form of its own. It may be conceived as the Experiencer, the Thinker, the Performer of action, the one who Senses, the one who lives, the one who has *attributes*, & such. In essence, the Ego is the concept of "I" in whatever guise it may appear.

All Duality & Ignorance is from the Ego, by the Ego, & in the Ego. The Universe is no separate existence, for the Self is all in all at all times & is unmixed, & transcendent of the form of all,. But the Ego gives the deluded wrong view of "Duality".

The Body is not one's home, for the self is unborn & bodiless. But the Ego gives the deluded view of the Self & the Body as knotted together. Bliss is of the Eternal Self, but the Ego gives the deluded view that Happiness is not here, not immediate, & ever present as Existence itself, & must be elsewhere. The Ego appears as the "knot" between the Self, of the nature of pure Existence-Consciousness-Bliss, & Form.

The Formless Self, *Brahman* alone is the ever solitary Reality, but the Ego gives the deluded view of existent form, of something other existing, of a 2nd which it itself presumably is. Yet when inquired into, to determine its nature, the Ego, withs all that depends upon it, vanishes being unreal.

The Ego cannot be equated with the Self.



Reality 70

Ego (continued)

What & where is the Ego ? One should inquire into this deeply to realize the natural non-Ego state which is blissful & free from all Bondage & Suffering. The Ego is merely a false notion – a bare assumption – of Individuality, of a separate "I", which is the supposition of differentiation from the Absolute.

The Ego has no form of its own, & so to appear in any way, it creates an illusion of Form & attaches itself to such Illusion, such Form. The Ego itself appears as the mis-identification with an attachment to the unreal forms of the Mind, the Senses, the Body, & the World. Thus in the course of spiritual practice, when one destroys these mis-identifications & attachments, the Ego dissolves.

The "I" notion is the separate experiencer, the individual Knower, the embodied entity, the Doer of action, & the notion of an "other". The Ego itself is the concept of a separate Universe in which the Ego – "I" supposedly exists.

Upon The ego is based the illusory differentiation of the World, the Individual, & the Supreme (*jagad – jiva – Para*). The 3 are not 3, but rely but only that, the Non-Dual Self. Only with the Ego does the 1 appear to be 3. The Ego appears as it is conceived.

The World & thought are unreal, & so is the Ego. One sees the Ego's guises & its appearances. Where is the Ego's existence ? One sees the Ego's effects, but where is the cause of the Ego ? If the Ego is real in any manner, it should be actually experienced. If the Ego is an entity, it should exist somewhere. If the Ego itself is in Effect, it should have a Cause. One should inquire to determine if the Ego exists at all. Is the Ego actually experienced ? The Ego has neither shape nor size, & it has no physical attributes. The Ego is never sensed, for one never sees, hears, touches, or has any other sensory impression of the Ego. The Ego is not simply the word "I", nor the particular thought of "I".

Realized Sages who are fully identified with the true Self alone, may still say "I", but they neither give rise to nor retain any Ego. The Ego has no form of its own & is never seen by itself as it is. Though the Ego is an assumption of a division in Existence, how can Existence be dual or be divided in itself ?

The Ego – "I" is not a quality or *attribute* of the Self, since it is not invariably related to the Self. It does not continue in Liberation nor in Deep Dreamless Sleep. Since it does not so continue in must belong to something else, & not to the Self.

To what does the Ego belong? If one inquires one will find that the Ego belongs to nothing. The Ego cannot belong to what depends on it, & the *attribute* of the Self, being homogeneous & never changing, will never have an Ego at any time.

The Ego cannot be equated with the Self.



Reality 71

Ego (continued)

If the Ego were an *attribute* of the Self the Ego would be eternal, in which case, all liberation, all Scriptures, all spiritual life, all spiritual practice, all sayings of sages, and such would be futile and false. This would be absurd. It is better to give up the notion of the Ego then to hold to it as well it alone being real. The Ego is not a temporary *quality* of the Self. The truth cannot be like the case of an unripe fruit becoming a ripe fruit, in which they would be 2 stages or States for the Self: one with an Ego & one without an Ego. The Existence of the Self is Absolute & unchanging. If the Ego were ever part of the Existence, as part of it or sharing in it in any way whatsoever, Existence would be changeful & transitory. Existence would cease to exist. Existence is always Ego-less & has no Ego *quality* whatsoever.

Where is the Ego ? It is not in the World, which is unreal. The Ego is not in the Body, which is unreal, & not the Self. The Ego is not in the Senses, which are unreal & not the Self. The Ego is not in thought which is unreal & not the Self. The Ego is not in the flawless, unmodified, perfect Self. The Ego is never actually experienced by itself & is not actually experienced in any of these other principles. The Ego dwells nowhere.

If the Ego is not a thing in itself, does not reside anywhere, & is not inherent in anything, the remaining possibility is that it's supposed existence is an effect produced by something else.

The Ego is not produced by the World, the Body, the Senses, the *prana*, or the mind. These produce phenomena & sensations; physical, subtle, & mental experiences; & thoughts. These appear after the Ego is differentiated & so they cannot produce it, for the Effect does not produce a Cause. The Ego produces them; they do not produce the Ego.

The Ego is not produced by the Self, which is the Absolute. The Absolute Self does not produce or create at all but it ever is just as it is. That the Ego is said to rise from the Origin, or Substrate, of the Self is only expedient teaching intended to guide those desirous of Liberation deeper into the Origin, the one Substrate, in order to help them realize its Ego-less Nature. Such instruction should not be interpreted to mean that the Ego is really born or that the Self actually gives birth to the Ego. The Ego cannot be self-produced. For to imagine so would be to suppose its pre-existence, which is absurd & which would lead to the consequent question as to what caused that pre-existent Ego ? This in turn, would lead either to the Delusion regarding the effects causing the Cause, or a modification in the eternally, changeless Self, which possibilities have been negated by Self-Inquiry, or to an infinite regression of some sort. But the Self alone is infinite, & Causality is not real. One cannot actually recall when this Ego, the root of *Maya*, began, was created, or was born, though there is the knowledge of perpetual Existence which is of the Self alone. For never was there a time when you were not, & never would be a time when you will cease to be.

Thus the Self is ever the Unborn – neither coming from another State or thing nor giving birth to any state or thing – & the Ego is "unborn" as it never comes to be. This may be regarded as the final significance of Ramana Maharshi's Self-Inquiry as to "Whence am I ?" – graciously given to show the method of tracing inwardly from the identity of the "I" derives as well as "Who am I ?"

How can there be Ego's effect (Delusion), as the supposed Cause itself when it has never come to be ? The Ego is an assumption. Who assumes this assumption? No one. Who knows the Knowledge of the Self ? The Ego I cannot know the Self since the Self alone is capable of knowing.

The "I" is inert, & the known is a mere notion, a vacuous imagining, & an assumption that is non-existent. There is no Ego to be ignorant or to be bound, to attempt to know the Self, or to return to it, or to unite with the Self. The Self is what you are, & it is innately Ego-less.

The Ego cannot be equated with the Self.



Reality 72

Self-Inquiry (Atma Vichara)

Supreme Knowledge, Self-Knowledge is regards Knowledge about the of the True Nature of the Absolute Self & instruction regarding a path or spiritual practice for Self-Realization or Enlightenment.

In the Teaching of Non-Duality, which clearly reveals the identity of the Self & the Absolute (*Brahman*, God), Liberation or Self-Realization is recognized to be of the nature of Self-Knowledge. A path of Knowledge results in Self-Knowledge, & the primary method of the path is that of Self-Inquiry. The Inquiry is the introspection, or meditation, that ascertains, in the most experiential manner, of what one's true Identity consists. It is the Self-Revelation of the nature of Existence, or Consciousness itself, unobscured by any definition or mis-identification. Questioning inwardly as to "Who am I ?" one realizes one's true state of Non-Dual Existence, which is ever free, ever at peace, unchanging, without modifications, illimitable, timeless, indivisible, forever unconditioned, formless, undifferentiated – the One Reality.

Self-Inquiry involves the relinquishment of the false superimposition of forms & attributes upon the Self. This involves the recognition of the false definition & the Discernment of how it is not actually one's identity. It is the shifting of Identity from where it has been misplaced, such as being associated with the Body or with thought, & restoring it to its natural position, which is the Self alone. It is the ceasing of the confusion regarding what is Real & what is unreal. Erroneous attribution of Reality to the unreality, such as conceiving the World, objects, events, sensations, & thoughts to be real or to be the means of determining what is real, is relinquished

Summed up the in the concise phrase, "Who am I?", Self-Inquiry by the seeker of Self-Realization can also directly realize Liberation from the unreal bondage by inquiring, with each experience & notion, "For whom is this ?" This approach negates the Identity or Reality from the *objective* aspect & returns it to that which is inward, the Subject.

Then, recognizing that whatever it is, it is for "me," one should inquire, "Who am I?" This is, with a keen awareness, the inner discerning of the True Nature of one's Existence. The determination of the answer to Self-Inquiry cannot be in verbal, sensorial or conceptual terms, but is realized by the elimination of all definition, the dissolution of confusion regarding Reality, & the destruction of the Ego.



Reality 73

Self-Inquiry (continued)

Self-Inquiry reveals the invalid nature of all personal definitions, the Formless nature of Reality, & that the Ego is nothing but a false assumption whose nature is non-existence. When all that is unreal, not the Self, is removed, the real Self alone remains in its own Knowledge of itself – Self-Knowledge, which is devoid of such differentiation as the Knower, the Knowing, & the Known.

Self-Inquiry is the essential practice. The success of any spiritual practice in yielding Freedom & Peace is directly proportionate to the relinquishment of mis-identification, the dissolution of the Ego or false notion of Individuality, that occurs in mis-identification. Self-Inquiry does not include any of the Duality that one is attempting to transcend.

Supports for Self-inquiry are actually more than supports; rather they are integral to the whole experience of inquiring to know the Self. In Advaita Vedanta, they have been referred to as the "requisites" for Realization or the 4-fold-sadhana (practice) *Sadhana Chatushtaya* for Realization or Liberation. These were expounded in the clearest teachings of Non-Duality & Self-Knowledge, known as *Advaita Vedanta*, by Sri Shankara. These practices relate to the attainment of Knowledge & the dissolution of the Illusion of ignorant Dualist & its consequent Bondage & Suffering. Thus is realized the natural State of the Self, *Brahman*, which is pure Existence-Consciousness-Bliss.

The 4-Requisites are: Discrimination *viveka*, Detachment *vairagya*, the 6-Essentials *shatsampati*, & Desire for Liberation *mumukshutva*.

The 6-Essentials are: Peacefulness *sama*, Self-Control *dama*, Renunciation / Non-Dependence *uparati*, Endurance / Fortitude *titiksha*, Faith / Conviction *shraddha*, & profound, concentrated, formless Meditation *samadhana*.

If *Sadhana Chatushtaya's* 6-Essentials *shatsmpati* were represented as "*dama* etc." then one mnemonic for the 4 Requisites could be the "4 D's" namely: **D** – discrimination, **D** – etachment, **d** – *ama* etc. **D** – esire.

Alternately, if the 6-Essentials "*uparati* etc" were represented as "*uparati* etc." then one mnemonic for the Sanskrit term could be the "2 V's & 2 U's" [reversing the alphabetical order of the 3 letters] namely: **V** – *iveka*, **V** – *airagya*, **u** – *parati*. 3 **u**'s – in *mUmUkshUtva*.

As for 6-Essentials *shatsmpati* themselves, one mnemonic follows a specific choice for the various English equivalents, namely: *sama* **E** – quanimity, *dama* **E** – limination (of sense seeking), *uparati* **E** – scape (from of sense attachment), *titiksha* **E** – ndurance, *shraddha* **E** – *ka Grta* one pointedness, *samadhana* **E** – ecstasy or *samadhi*. Given these specific equivalents, the mnemonic for the 6-Essentials becomes the "6 E's" (as in **E** for **E** – ssentials).

Each of the 4-Requisites requisites is helpful to the Self-Inquiry to know the Self. Each of the 4-Requisites supports the others. Though one requires Discrimination to become Detached (otherwise, one will not perceive who is to be detached & from what to be detached). It may be the Desire for Liberation coupled with Conviction in the teachings that give rise to that Discrimination, which is further strengthened by Meditation & expressed through some kind of Renunciation on a basis of peacefulness or Equanimity. Each of the 4-Requisites may be considered separately, or they may be considered as one whole. These requisites for Realization are to be understood, meditated upon, & practiced within the context of Non-Duality for the purpose of Self-Realization.

The 4-Requisites for Realization are taught with special relevance to Self-Inquiry, the introspective determination of the True Nature of one's own Self, which is the Absolute Self. The significance of them & the actual experience of them for those on the path of Knowledge are far-reaching.

➤ Advaita Vedanta	(Shankaracharya)
➤ Visistadvaita Vedanta	(Ramanujacharya)
➤ Dvait Vedanta	(Madhvacharya)
➤ Dvaitadvita Vedanta	(Nimbarkacharya)
➤ Shudhadvaita	(Nimbarkacharya)
➤ Achintaya Bhedabhedha	(Chaitanya Mahaprabhu)

Reality 74

6-Requisites: Discrimination *viveka*

Discrimination refers to the ability to Discern what is true & what is not true. It may commence with deep thinking or contemplation, yet as it becomes clear & firm, it is a matter of actual inner experience. It may start with what is very basic, yet continues to be instrumental in the Knowledge until Realization itself. Unless a person Discerns the Source of Happiness, there is not much of a possibility of finding that Happiness, let alone retaining that Happiness without subsequent loss.

Unless a person Discerns the purpose of Life, it will not be fulfilled. It is only for a person exercising keen Discrimination regarding what constitutes Realization that a corresponding clear way of realizing will become evident. Otherwise, the seeker will practice in a random fashion, practice will not correlate to unexamined ignorant tendencies. Rather serving to destroy such delusive notions & patterns of conceptualizing, the practice will overlook the unexamined ignorant tendencies (*vasanas*).

It will not be possible for one to know oneself without releasing the mis-identifications that currently bind or obscure. It will not be possible to thoroughly release such mis-identifications unless they are discerned as being mis-identifications rather than being assumed to be one's actual nature, which instead is the Absolute Self ?

Discrimination enables one to know Reality as it is. Ignorance consists of taking the Real to be unreal & the unreal to be Real. One must Discern which is Real & which is unreal in order to be free of Illusion *Maya* or Ignorance (*avidya, ajnana*) or Superimposition *vivarta* , or *moha* Delusion.

Freedom from Ignorance is true Knowledge, the non-conceptual Wisdom that sees Reality as it is. This Discrimination cannot be a sensory activity. As long as one assumes that the Senses determine what is real, so long one imagines a supposed external World to be existent & objects to be real.

The Senses display only tiny impressions – minute & momentary, no matter how varied, complex, or large they may appear to be – & not the ever-present Existence as it is. The Senses are incapable of determining the Real Nature of the Existence that is the Self.

One cannot expect to see the formless Self, to hear the silent Self, to touch the intangible Self, etc. Moreover, what is Real must always be Real, in order to be Real. If it is not always be Real, a thing is entirely unreal or a mis-perception of what is Real.

The transient Senses are incapable of perceiving the eternal Reality. The Self which one seeks to realize is the eternal Reality. Therefore, Self-Inquiry utilizing Discrimination to know the Self is not a sensory activity, does not depend on the Senses, & eliminates the belief in the validity or reality of the sensory “perceptions”.



Reality 75

4-Requisites: Discrimination *viveka* (continued)

Self-Inquiry reveals the sense-transcendent Self. It is in this light that Discrimination is the understanding that *Brahman* (the vast Absolute) is Reality (*satya*) & the material World is false (*mithya*). This becomes experientially understood.

Though the Discrimination may commence with thinking, in actual practice, it does not remain as just thought. The Self is not a thought; nor is it all the thoughts gathered together. To confound thought with the Self is Ignorance. No thought can be ever-existent, Limitless, utterly Formless, & Eternal. No thought is actually Consciousness, which is the Self. Discrimination discerns the Self & thus reveals its freedom from thought. With Discrimination, one comprehends that Consciousness is the unaffected Witness of all thought & cannot be a thought. By this discrimination, one is no longer bound by thought. Profound Discrimination reveals the Existence of Consciousness alone & the fact that there is really no such existent thing as thought.

This process of Discernment, from the most basic to the finest Discrimination, actually uses something inherent in & natural to everyone. Everyone knows if he is happy or not. Everyone knows that he exists. How is it that everyone has this intrinsic Discernment? It is because Knowledge is of the very nature of the Self. The aspirant for Liberation can very well use this intrinsic ability to Discern, an ability that is interior & unfailing, for the purpose of Self-Inquiry to know the Self.

To commence Discrimination, one may start Meditation with what are seemingly simple questions, such as, "What is the source of Happiness ? What is Eternal ? What is Real? Who am I ?" Though simple & basic, these questions remain extremely useful continually in the practice. The significance of these questions deepens in direct proportion to the depth of Discrimination. Discrimination may very well manifest as a sorting process, with more emphasis usually on the *negation* of what is *not* Eternal, not Reality, or not the Self. The result lies in the Eternal Reality of the Self being left unobscured & Self-evident by virtue of this Discrimination.

The Discrimination should also be applied to one's view of Realization in order to free such of Dualistic conceptions. Furthermore, the Discrimination must be applied to one's own practices in order to sort out what is actually useful & what not useful in the effort to realize the Self. Considering how short life is & how important it is to apply oneself fully, it is imperative to, again & again, clarify one's comprehension of the Path so that effort is wisely applied & useful.

The distinguishing of what is helpful & what is a hindrance to spiritual development is a result of Discrimination. The spiritual Discernment of what action is beneficial & what is deleterious, the law of *karma*, as well as transcendence of *karma*, which can occur only in Knowledge & not physically or in bodily terms, are all a result of Discrimination.

The distinguishing of the causes of emotional moods & how to liberate oneself from them is also a result of Discrimination. The Discernment of mental tendencies & concepts & dis-identifying from them is a matter of Discrimination as well. The destruction of the Manifest Egoistic tendencies or mis-identifications & the Realization of the absence of the Ego altogether is of the nature of discrimination. All the aspects of liberating oneself from mis-identifications, or super-impositions of the non-Self upon the Self, & ascertaining what is true about the Self – all depend upon the ability called, "spiritual Discrimination". The significance of this Discrimination *viveka* & the actual experience for those on the path of Knowledge are far-reaching.

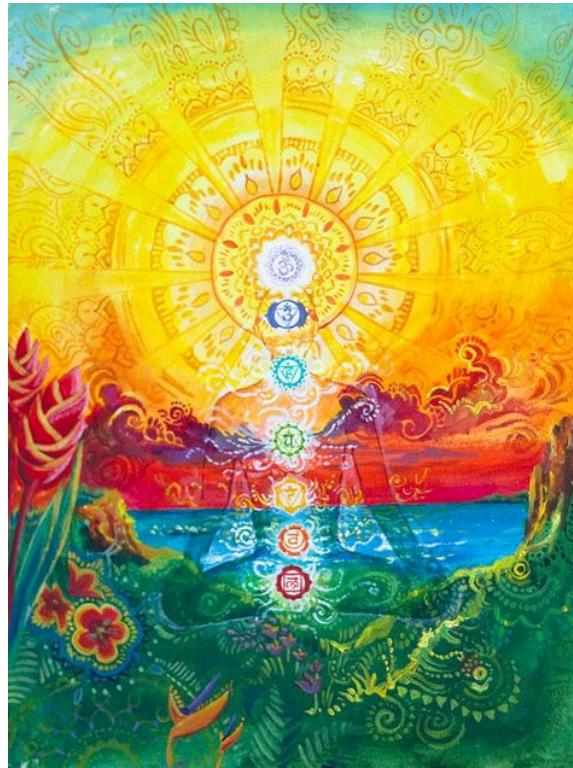
TOE vol 2 prajnanam brahma
Consciousness is the Absolute

ayam atma brahma
This Self is the Absolute

tat tvam asi
That Thou Art

aham brahmasmi
I am the Absolute Reality

J Stiga



Reality 76

4-Requisites: Discrimination *viveka* (continued)

Discrimination may manifest as a practice of comparison & contrast in meditation & as the elimination of the Super-imposition of various things & ideas upon the Self, which alone is the source of Happiness, one's identity, & Reality. Discrimination causes these – Happiness, Identity, & Reality – to be known where they truly abide: as One & as the Self alone. This comparing & contrasting takes the form of discerning the unchanging from the changeful, the Eternal from the transitory, the continuous from the sporadic, the non-objective from the objective, the non-dependent from the dependent, the indivisible from the multiple or divisible, & by similar distinctions between the Real Self & the unreal mis-identifications or things with which one mis-identifies. At its zenith, Discrimination reveals that which has been negated as utterly non-existent & that the Reality alone is.

Discrimination should not be wrongly associated with mere intellectual learning, cogitation, & theory. On the contrary, Discrimination reveals that which is beyond the Intellect, what is not a product of thought, & destroys the personal opinions of the pseudo-entity, the Ego, to reveal what actually exists. In practice, Discrimination may be subtle or vivid revelation, but it always signifies a shift in what one feels one's Identity is.

If one supposedly knows better but cannot live up to it, sees Attachment but cannot abandon it, recognizes a binding emotion but continues to dwell in it, understands a concept to be such but continues to mis-identify with it, such is a lack of Discrimination or Knowledge. Indeed, such means that one has only added the new term to the old Delusion, Illusion, Bondage, & Suffering. That is not Discrimination. No such thing occurs in real Discrimination, just as one does not run for water in a *mirage* when one

knows it to be a *mirage*, does not touch something *burning* hot when one knows it be *hot*, & is not fooled or frightened by a supposed *snake* when one knows it to be only a *rope*.

Spiritual Discrimination may come quickly or slowly, in a flash or after repeated Contemplation & Meditation, entirely on one's own or after detailed instruction. What is essential is that one develops the ability to keenly Discern. Without such Discrimination, the light of Wisdom, or Knowledge, will not dawn, even though the Reality is ever present & within oneself.

Spiritual Discrimination reveals the Truth, which transcends all forms & actions, all words & thought. The aspirant should exercise Discrimination to arrive at the actual experience & true meaning of the Teachings of Sages, using one's best reasoning powers for an inner-most purpose. The seeing of the Self beyond all notions is a result of Discrimination.

It is only that which one truly knows that is actually experienced. It is only that which is actually experienced that one truly knows. Spiritual Discrimination commences when one abandons any illusory division between understanding & experience, & they are one & simultaneous. The Path is the fusion of understanding & experience. One's own Existence is simultaneously known & experienced, & it is precisely at such inner depth that spiritual Discrimination should be practiced.

Spiritual Discrimination gives rise to the other Requisites for Realization. It is the cornerstone of spiritual advancement. It is like a bright lamp taken with one. It illuminates the way & in the hunt for shadows, everywhere it is brought, no darkness is seen to exist.

Discrimination is of the very essence of the path of Knowledge, & it is such a way in Knowledge that results in Self-Knowledge. The significance of Discrimination & the actual experience for those on the path of Knowledge are far-reaching.



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4-Requisites: Detachment vairagya

If Discrimination does not lead to Detachment, it is not sufficiently deep, & its purpose, which is the experience of lasting Happiness remains unfulfilled. Discrimination with Detachment leads to Liberation, which is full of Bliss & Peace. Discrimination yields the ability to become detached, & Detachment enables the seeker to become further discriminating.

Detachment comes by clarity regarding the nature of Happiness & the nature of that which endures. Attachment occurs due to Ignorance regarding the source of Happiness & because one believes that that to which one is attached, be it an object, a person, an event, a situation, or any other thing, will endure & never change or perish. Meditation upon the transient nature of all things, relations, events, & situations helps to develop Detachment. Further Meditation that ascertains the Truth about Happiness, be it called Peace, satisfaction, love, or by any other term, results in Detachment. The seeker of Self-Realization should meditate upon being Detached & then meditate with Detachment upon the essential Self-Inquiry into the Self

If one is attached, one suffers. It is not possible to be free & truly content as long as one is attached. Attachment creates Suffering, obscures Wisdom, & gives the false sense of bondage. One should not be confused about Attachment & feel that it is integral to Love.

Love is of the Unity of the Truth of the nature of all beings, but Attachment actually produces an Illusion of separation & merely obstructs that very Love. Similar is it with the sense of "security" that one in Delusion may regard as dependent on Attachment. Attachment makes for the absence of Peace, the sense of insecurity. Even if, in delusion, one supposes these provide security or Love, the *anxiety* over these, which is evident to anyone who is discerning, is Suffering & a very insecure state. If there is Freedom from Attachment, Peace is present within.

Attachment is a mode of Mind & not a particular action or the possession of something. Though Renunciation has been used by many spiritual beings to enhance, help, or express their becoming Detached, the Detachment, itself, is an inner state & not a particular action. With Detachment, one can abide free & at Peace in the midst of pleasant or unpleasant circumstances, with friends or with those who carry animosity, among others or all alone, with wealth or with poverty, & when active & when inactive.

The significance of Detachment & the actual experience for those on the path of Knowledge are far-reaching.